

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6575

AMEMBASSY AMMAN FLASH

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T MOSCOW 3038

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, WB, GW, UR, US

SUBJ: BAHR-BREZHNEV TALKS

REF: STATE 042319, SENT TOSEC 298

1. WE HAVE JUST SEEN FRG AMBASSADOR SAHM WHO INFORMS US THAT HE HAS NOT YET RECEIVED DETAILED FILL-IN ON BAHR-BREZHNEV TALKS. BAHR, WHO TOLD SAHM THAT HE HOPED TO SEE ME SOMETIME DURING HIS VISIT, IS SPENDING THE DAY OUTSIDE OF MOSCOW AND IS, THEREFORE, UNAVAILABLE.

2. SAHM NOTES, HOWEVER, THAT BAHR HAS SPOKEN OPENLY AND FRANKLY WITH BOTH BREZHNEV AND FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER KUZNETSOV ON THE WHOLE RANGE OF PROBLEMS RELATING TO BERLIN. BAHR HAS TOLD SOVIETS THAT FRG GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC ARE EXTREMELY DISAPPOINTED THAT NO PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN THIS AREA SINCE BREZHNEV'S VISIT TO BONN LAST YEAR. ACCORDING TO SAHM, BAHR TOLD BREZHNEV THAT BRANDT COULD HARDLY THINK OF VISITING SOVIET UNION AGAIN TO MEET WITH BREZHNEV IF DISCUSSION ON BERLIN HAD TO REVERT BACK TO SQUARE ONE.

3. BAHR DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE RECEIVED ANY SATISFACTION WHATSOEVER IN HIS TALKS WITH EITHER BREZHNEV OR KUZNETSOV THUS FAR, ALTHOUGH BREZHNEV SUGGESTED THAT HE MEET AGAIN WITH BAHR AT THE END OF THE LATTER'S VISIT. IT SEEMS UNLIKELY

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TO THE GERMANS THAT ANY PROGRESS WILL BE MADE IN THE ABSENCE

OF GROMYKO. SAHM SAID BAHR THEREFORE MAY REMAIN IN MOSCOW UNTIL GROMYKO RETURNS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST, BUT GERMANS ARE NOT SURE WHEN THAT WILL BE. (ANYTHING WE COULD PASS ON TO SAHM ABOUT GROMYKO'S TRAVEL PLANS WOULD BE APPRECIATED; WE NOTE THAT UPON LEAVING DAMASCUS, GROMYKO SAID HE WOULD RETURN THERE FROM CAIRO FOR MORE TALKS.) MEANWHILE, THE TWO SIDES HAVE AGREED THAT EXPERTS SHOULD AGAIN MEET TO DISCUSS THE LEGAL ASSISTANCE QUESTION. THE FRG TEAM IS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE FROM BONN FOR THAT PURPOSE ON SUNDAY, MARCH 3.

4. IN ADDITION TO MEETING WITH BREZHNEV AND KUZNETSOV, BAHR WAS INVITED TO HAVE DINNER ALONE WITH ALEXANDROV AND BLATOV, BREZHNEV'S AIDES, ON MARCH 1. WHILE SAHM AGAIN HAD NO DETAILED INFORMATION, HE NOTED THAT ALEXANDROV AT ONE POINT HAD ASKED BAHR WHY THE WORD "FEDERAL" COULD NOT BE REMOVED FROM THE TITLE OF THE FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY. REPORTEDLY, BAHR DID NOT EXCLUDE THIS POSSIBILITY.

5. COMMENT. ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT KNOW THE CONTEXT IN WHICH ALEXANDROV'S COMMENT WAS MADE (AND WE REALIZE THAT SOVIETS HAVE MENTIONED IT BEFORE), IT PROVIDES A HIGH-LEVEL HINT THAT THE SOVIETS ARE PREPARED TO FIND SOME FACE-SAVING COMPROMISE WITH REGARD TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY IN WEST BERLIN. AT THE SAME TIME, WE WOULD ANTICIPATE THAT THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO EXERT MAXIMUM PRESSURE TO OBTAIN ASSURANCES THAT THE FEDERAL PRESENCE WOULD LEVEL OFF IN THE FUTURE.

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